

Living on the Edge

It's day 42 and I'm the last of my kind. I've done unspeakable things in order to reach this status such as leaving my buddies to get sucked up by the all-powerful force which activates once a week. Maybe it activates once every two weeks. Maybe it's not even day 42. I don't know. But I do know something. I must survive. I must find a way to escape this cold, dark and fallaciously safe environment. One single error, miscalculation or false step could lead to my demise. A demise of which I know to be inevitable, but one I must stall for as long as possible. To live life as a dust bunny in an ordinary household is to live life on the edge.

Each day I lose a part of myself. And no, I do not mean this figuratively. As each day passes, I lose a large portion of lint, dust, hair — you name it. *BZZZZZ!* Oh god. That sound is all too familiar. My fuzzy stomach starts to turn and sweat glands I didn't know was possible for me to make, start to produce. The portal which has a tendency to swallow my friends whole, has been activated. All I need to do is survive, right? Pwshhh, that's no big deal. I pick what's left of me off the ground and start rolling wherever the wind takes me. The only reason I trust this logic is that it hasn't failed me so far! But I guess today is a special case. The more I tumble forward, the louder the portal's whirring gets. In a panic, I try to roll the other way but with the force of the portal and power of the wind, I am no match. Even using every muscle in my body — which would be 0 — I failed to move in the opposite direction. Is this it? Am I done for? Have I even left a footprint on this Earth? Will I be remembered for future generations to come? What have I done to benefit citizens of Earth for the next few years? I close my eyes and wait for the end.

But it doesn't come. Instead, I feel myself being ripped apart by a monstrosity I've never seen in my life. With pointed ears, 4 legs, a tail, and eyes with thin pupils, this thing has managed to become the most terrifying being I've ever come across. I open my mouth to scream yet nothing

comes out. After a long and thoughtful analysis, I realize it may be because I have no mouth to begin with. Somehow the beast stops tearing me limb by limb and I am dropped to the ground, gasping for the air I never really needed in the first place. It's physically impossible for me to move but I know I have to try. I have to fight. I have to rebel. I have to do it not only for me but for my pals who have lost their lives to that cruel hunk of metal.

So I do. I drag myself across the carpeted floor and find shelter. Minutes later, I come across a polished wooden sculpture consisting of 4 legs which soared multiple feet above me. I crawl underneath it and finally close my eyes which once again, I have to remind myself are non-existent. But someone's movement — *something's* movement keeps me awake. I jolt my absent eyes awake and look around only to see another ball of lint just like me.

"I...I thought I was the only one."

"Yeah so did I," the ball responds though my only view of him is from his back.

As he turns around I get a glimpse of his face — his twisted, messed up and ancient face.

"How long have you been down here?" I ask.

"Long enough. I've seen those like us come and go. I've seen them be mauled by that vicious beast. I've had their screams pierce my ears to this very day. The only place where that monster can't reach is here, in the darkness... Shhh. Do you hear that?"

I look around and sure enough, I hear it. The footsteps of the beast which swallowed my friends whole soon became louder and louder. Its feet grow closer so I grasp my mouth with my hand in order to quiet myself down. Its hands sweep underneath the structure above me, reaching forward as far as they can. The purrs of this massive creature echo in my ears so I look away in order to keep calm. I stay in position for a few more minutes until it finally gives up and walks away. I sigh in relief and look to my side.

To my horror, the ball of lint which I befriended merely *seconds* ago was already torn apart by the savage claws of the orange monster. I rush over to his side trying to feel his pulse however it soon dawns on me that we, dust bunnies, have no such thing. He struggles yet he manages to open his mouth only to say one word...

“S-s-s-survive.”

And with that, he closed his non-existent eyelids for the last time. I analyze my surroundings and to my right is what seems to be a collar. With all my strength I pick it up and squint at it. It reads “Mr. Fluffykins”. Of course! This belongs to the beast! I must do whatever it takes to escape Mr. Fluffykins not for me but for my family. For my friends. And last but not least, for the ball of lint whose name I never got and who I knew for less than a minute.

I gather my literal remains together which consist of dirt, pennies, and dust, and walk on forward away from my prized shelter. But that’s when the hideous creature spots me. I sprint across the house in a zig-zag pattern, struggling to maintain my entire body together. Just then the front door opens wide, bathing me in a beam of sunlight — a beam of which I have not seen in months — and I know what I have to do. I dash toward the exit, pouring as much energy into my legs as I possibly can. And that’s when I see it— the luscious green hills, the vibrant blue sky and most importantly, the gleaming sun above the concrete ground! As the door closes behind me it all sinks in. Mr. Fluffykins can no longer hunt me down nor can he tear me limb from limb because I am finally free!!

